Research Centre (LERC), as a tamper evident sealing system, for LPG cylinders with a view to supplying correct weight gas to the consumers. PVC seals are difficult to duplicate, shrink at high temperature and require special technical expertise to manufacture.

Besides, the following measures are being taken to prevent the supply of under-weight cylinders by way of pilferage:—

(i) LPG (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000 under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 has been promulgated. As per this Order, supply of partially used cylinders to LPG consumers by the distributors of OMCs had been prohibited. Such offence is punishable with imprisonment from 3 months to 7 years under the Essential Commodities Act.

(ii) State Governments are empowered to take action against erring distributors under the provisions of the above Order.

(iii) Marketing Disclipline Guidelines (MDG) for LPG distributors of OMCs have been laid down by the Government in April, 2001. According to these guidelines, in case of establishment of any complaint of supply of partially used cylinders to customer, a fine of Rs. 20,000 plus the price of LPG pilfered/supplied short at commercial rate for 1st offence, Rs. 50,000 plus the price of LPG pilfered/supplied short at commercial rate for 2nd offence, and termination for 3rd offence by the distributors is imposed.

(iv) LPG distributors of OMCs are under strict instructions to supply the cylinders of right quantity and quality to their customers. The officials of OMCs carry out random checks at distributor's godown, delivery point as well as en route to ensure that no pilferage take place. On the establishment of any complaint of supply of partially used cylinder to customers, action against he erring distributor is taken in terms of MDG/or distributorship agreement.

GAIL's projects in Bangladesh

4288. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL) has finalized gas pipeline projects in Bangladesh and has signed MoU with its counterpart Petrobangla recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether as a reciprocal gesture for consultancy services rendered

by GAIL, the Government of Bangladesh will consider permitting a gas pipeline corridor for transmission of natural gas from Myanmar to India?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) GAIL has so far not provided any consultancy services to Petrobangla. However, in Nov.-Dec., 2002, GAIL had undertaken an ADB-sponsored CNG consultancy study in Bangladesh and the final report was submitted to ADB in March, 2003. For these studies GAIL had interactions with M/s Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Ltd. (RPGCL), a subsidiary of Petrobangla engaged in the CNG business in Bangladesh.

There is no linkage between the earlier consultancy study and the corridor proposed for a gas pipeline from Myanmar to India through Bangladesh.

Expansion of pilot projects on ethanol production

4289. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has studied major global ethanol programmes whereby in Brazil the admixture of ethanol with petrol is as high as 28 to 30 per cent;

(b) whether Government would assure the Indian sugar industry of its long-term commitment to the ethanol blending programme to enable the industry to step up ethanol production solely dedicated to fuel blending purposes; and

(c) what are the reasons for Government restricting its pilot projects on ethanol production only to a few States?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir. In Brazil, ethanol is normally blended in the range of 20-25%.

(b) The 5% ethanol-blended petrol (EBP) programme has been introduced with a view to giving support to the agriculture sector and reducing environmental pollution. However, the supply of ethanol was seriously affected since April, 2004, particularly in the States of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. The Government is committed to